

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x10 - "In Two Minds."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA

Starting close on TARAN'ATAR, as he ROARS into the camera. He's inside the security cell where we left him last time, and still in the throes of madness.

He quickly turns, as if hearing something inside his cell. He rushes the invisible something, slams it against the wall... of course there is nothing there.

He looks down at his empty hand, confused and frustrated... but then he turns again at another non-existent sound, and goes through it all again.

He turns, rams his hands right into the force field, as if trying to twist and break it. Pushes his face right into the force field as well, SCREAMS into the sizzling energy.

VANNIS

stands in the centre of the room, arms folded, watching the Jem'Hadar soldier carry on. The Vorta really has no idea what to make of all this. Confused, worried, but not about to show it in front of...

RO

who stands nearby, watching them both curiously.

RO

Have you seen anything like this
with other Jem'Hadar?

VANNIS

Superficially, it reminds me of
the effects of ketracel white
withdrawal. That too can sometimes
lead to uncontrolled violence and
hallucinations.

RO

But Taran'atar hasn't used white
for more than two years.

VANNIS
(wild guess)
Delayed reaction, perhaps?

RO
Delayed by two years? I doubt
that.

TARAN' ATAR

continues to rage in his cell, attacking invisible enemies.
He hears something again, spins to confront it...

...and L'HAAN sits calmly on the bench, gazing at him.

L'HAAN
You are wasting your energy,
Taran'atar. There is no way for
you to destroy me.

Infuriated, he launches towards her...

...but she quickly stands and confronts him back. He jerks
to a halt, surprised.

L'HAAN
It's your own fault.

FLASHBACK - 9x21 "THE SOUL KEY"

Taran'atar snaps the real L'Haan's neck.

BACK TO SCENE

L'Haan moves quick as a cat, brings her hands up and clamps
them to either side of Taran'atar's face - forced double
mind-meld style.

ANGLE

as Taran'atar reacts to this, alone. No sign of L'Haan.

Ro and Vannis watch him jerk and flail, no idea what's happening to him. Now we can also see SEVAK standing guard at the back of the room, armed and alert.

VANNIS

When did this start?

RO

It only got this bad yesterday. But I'm starting to think it's been building for a while. He seemed distracted when I was talking to him the other day. And Kira said he'd been using a Vulcan meditation program.

VANNIS

(incredulous)

A Jem'Hadar? Meditating?

Ro shrugs. But now they look to Taran'atar again, because he's gone quiet.

The torture seems to be over... he slumps, exhausted, then crumples to the ground, semi-conscious. A few twitches, and he's still.

Ro and Vannis exchange a worried look, then Ro cautiously approaches the cell. Small steps, not sure what could happen. She crouches down to his level, peers through the force field at him.

RO

Taran'atar? Are you alright?

No response. She looks back over her shoulder at Vannis, and then tries again.

RO

Taran'atar... Can you hear me?

Finally, Taran'atar replies - smooth and low.

TARAN'ATAR

I hear you, Lieutenant.

He starts to gradually uncrumple himself. Ro stands and steps back away from the cell, still unsure. Moving slowly and smoothly, Taran'atar straightens himself, pulling up to his tallest height, his eyes closed as he centres himself.

Finally, he takes a deep breath and opens his eyes, looks out at Ro and Vannis, completely in control.

RO

Are you okay now?

TARAN'ATAR

Forgive me. My behaviour must have been quite disconcerting for you. I am now quite fine.

RO

You're not going to attack us?

TARAN'ATAR

Of course not, Lieutenant. Why would I? It would be...

(beat)

...illogical.

On Taran'atar, as he cocks a Vulcan-esque eyebrow...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

The usual shot, but with Dominion vessel 288 parked at an upper pylon.

3 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Beginning on the VIEW SCREEN on the long side of the wall. It shows the high-angle security cam image of Taran'atar, sitting calmly in his cell, possibly even meditating.

BASHIR (o.s.)

Wait - are you saying you think
Taran'atar's holding a *katra*?

This is a senior staff meeting, with KIRA, VAUGHN, Ro, Vannis, BASHIR, MATTHIAS and CENN present. Though Kira sits at the top of the table, this is Vaughn's meeting.

VAUGHN

I believe so, yes.

CENN

Hold on - what's a *katra*?

MATTHIAS

It's part of Vulcan psychology and mysticism. When they're near death, they have the ability to pass on an imprint of their psyche as a kind of telepathic record. The more religious among us might describe it as their "soul."

BASHIR

The ideal option is to download the record into what's called a katric ark for posterity. But if that's not possible, they can implant it telepathically into another person instead.

RO

And why would you think that's what's going on here?

VAUGHN

You gave me the idea, Lieutenant. When you were suffering from your amnesia, you said it felt like somebody else's memories forcing their way into your head. That's exactly how T'Prynn described it.

Vaughn hits some keys on the table, and the view screen adds a second image - the personnel record of T'PRYNN, with an image of the Vulcan woman in a TOS-era red uniform and the caption LT CMDR T'PRYNN, DECEASED 2349.

VAUGHN

She was a treasured friend and colleague of mine for many years, when I worked in Intelligence. She introduced me to Ruriko... we named our daughter after her. What's relevant here, however, is that long before I met her, she had been *val'reth*.

Some baffled looks around the table. Bashir explains:

BASHIR

Someone who holds another's *katra* against their will.

VAUGHN

Like most Vulcans, T'Prynn had been betrothed at a young age, to a man named Sten. When the time came, she had no intention of going through with it. Had no intention of marrying any man. Unfortunately, Sten decided to force the issue. He invoked *koon-ut-kal-if-fee*.

MATTHIAS

"Marriage or challenge."

VAUGHN

Ritual combat, usually involving a champion to fight to the death on behalf of the woman. T'Prynn, however, fought for herself.

KIRA

Good for her.

VAUGHN

Quite. Sten was not so impressed. If he was mentally unbalanced or just at the mercy of powerful Vulcan mating drives, I can't say. But even after she killed him, he wasn't willing to concede defeat. Sten used his last breath to force his *katra* into her mind and continue the fight from within.

MATTHIAS

Oh my God...

RO

So she just had to live with him in her head?

VAUGHN

The elders of Mount Seleya were unable to help. Sten refused to let go. She repressed him as much as she could, but she was effectively suffering constant, repeated rape for almost fifty years... albeit of a telepathic rather than physical nature.

On Kira, appalled...

FLASHBACK - 9x21 "FEARFUL SYMMETRY"

Dukat advances on the memory-wiped Iliana, in her cell on Letau, he with a sadistic grin, her screaming in terror...

BACK TO SCENE

Kira shudders from the memory. Vannis speaks up, snippy:

VANNIS

Forgive my ignorance, Commander
Vaughn, but what has been the
point of this little story?

Vaughn smiles diplomatically. He gestures to the screen,
where Taran'atar still sits in his cell...

VAUGHN

The point is, if the death is both
unexpected and violent, then the
katra - this snapshot of the
psyche - can become "corrupted."
It's capturing an image of the
mind at its most traumatised.

4 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA

Taran'atar stands peacefully in the cell, hands behind his
back, face calm and composed. One might say... unemotional.
Ro stands outside the cell, tense and wary.

Begin with a front-on shot of Taran'atar, then pan sideways
around him, into the cell, through the force field...

BASHIR (v.o.)

So if this is what happened to
Taran'atar, then who is he...
"carrying" ?

As we pass to the inside of the cell, the FRITZ of the
force field covers the changeover - it is now L'Haan
standing calmly inside the cell, looking out at Ro.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

L'Haan, of course. The Intendant's
handmaiden.

RO (v.o.)

(she gets it now)
She mind-melded with him.

Ro taps her combadge, talks into it MOS.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

Yes. According to Taran'atar's own account, moments before he killed her, L'Haan had been engaged in a meld with him, trying to secretly gain his alliance.

The transporter signal forms over L'Haan...

ANGLE

...and Taran'atar disappears from the cell. Ro takes a deep breath and lets some of the tension out...

5 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

The surgical suite. Bashir, RICHTER, TARSES and ETANA are all on duty, with ALECO standing by as security. The transporter signal forms, delivering Taran'atar, now lying down smoothly upon the bio-bed. Bashir approaches.

BASHIR (v.o.)

And when he surprised her by breaking out of it, she didn't have time to properly close down the connection.

MATTHIAS (v.o.)

So when he killed her, her *katra* automatically flew into him, along the still-active connection.

VAUGHN (v.o.)

It probably wasn't intentional on her part. He couldn't have known the consequences of his actions.

On the bio-bed, Taran'atar lifts his arm. A couple of inches up, it contacts another force field. The field BUZZES at the contact, revealing that it covers his entire body, head to toe, in a tight fit around the bio-bed.

KIRA (v.o.)

Doctor, is there any way to test Vaughn's theory?

BASHIR (v.o.)
A deep brain scan would show up
changes in his neuro-electric
patterns. But it's not the kind of
scan I can do in a security cell.
We'd need to get him into the
Infirmary.

Bashir directs the medical team, and they move large brain-scanning machines into place around Taran'atar's head.

CENN (v.o.)
That's where he was heading when
he had his breakdown on the
Promenade.

VAUGHN (v.o.)
Perhaps that's not a coincidence.

BASHIR (v.o.)
You think L'Haan knew we'd find
her out? And deliberately tried to
stop him from going?

VAUGHN (v.o.)
Which would imply she has no more
intention of going than Sten did.

Bashir passes across the camera, briefly blocking our sight of Taran'atar. When he's gone, it's L'Haan lying there instead, watching every move they make.

6 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

Back to the meeting:

KIRA
So what do we do? How did T'Prynn
get rid of Sten? She did get rid
of him, right?

VAUGHN
Eventually, yes. But as I say,
even the highest Vulcan adepts
were helpless. And when they say

there's nothing they can do,
people tend to believe them. You
have to understand, there have
only been a handful of cases like
this in all of recorded history,
which for the Vulcans is a long
time. There's simply nobody alive
who knows the necessary rituals.

MATTHIAS

There must be something we can do.

VAUGHN

Only one thing that I can think
of. If we can't force L'Haan to
leave Taran'atar, then we have to
try and persuade her.

BASHIR

Another Vulcan?

CENN

We have Sevak.

VAUGHN

Another Vulcan, yes. Sevak, no.
We'd need somebody L'Haan has
reason to believe and trust.

RO

Who would that be? She doesn't
know anybody here. She's an entire
universe away from home.

VAUGHN

True. So there's only one option.

A moment... then Kira gets the answer.

KIRA

L'Haan.

Vaughn smiles approvingly. The others are confused...

CENN

I don't understand...

VAUGHN

The L'Haan that's currently inhabiting Taran'atar is the alternate universe version. The Intendant to our Kira. So we need to find this universe's version of the same person.

KIRA

(nodding)

It could work. Alright, I think we've got a plan.

She turns and gives orders to everyone in turn...

7 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA

Ro stands alone in the middle of the room, having just transported Taran'atar away. She is still shaken.

KIRA (v.o.)

Lieutenant Ro, work on getting Taran'atar safely out of the cells and into the Infirmary.

She turns and walks out. Sevak joins her.

8 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

The medical team works around Taran'atar.

BASHIR (v.o.)

Doctor, once he's there, you do your scans and confirm all this.

9 INT. DS9 - MATTHIAS'S OFFICE

Matthias is sat behind her desk, with Vaughn across from her. They both have computers and are scanning through file after file. Matthias takes notice of something...

KIRA (v.o.)

Counsellor, work with Vaughn to try and track down anything you can find on these rituals.

She turns her computer to face Vaughn, showing him the file she found. Vaughn peers at it, but shakes his head.

KIRA (v.o.)

If nobody else can do them for us,
maybe we can figure out a way to
do them for ourselves.

10 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

The business of Ops goes on as normal. Cenn stands at the central table, working hard. SHAR is at sciences, NOG at engineering, BOWERS at tactical, extras as needed.

KIRA (v.o.)

Major, I want you to comb the
Federation records and find
L'Haan. Explain the situation to
her and do your best to convince
her to help.

11 INT. DS9 - WARD ROOM

KIRA

Alright, everyone. Get to work.

Dismissed, the meeting breaks up. After everyone else leaves, Kira and Vannis are the last ones left. Kira approaches Vannis tactfully...

KIRA

You were awfully quiet.

VANNIS

Frankly, Captain, this entire
situation strikes me as the kind
of pseudo-scientific nonsense
Starfleet seems to regularly find
itself mired in. And now you're
pulling the Dominion down along
with you.

KIRA

(defensive)

This wasn't our fault, Vannis.

VANNIS
Perhaps. But it never happened
before we allied with you.

KIRA
We're trying to help him.

VANNIS
Another peculiarity. In the
Dominion we would simply kill him
and be done with it.

And with that she exits. Kira is left a bit disquieted...

12 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE

Ro enters from the rear cells area, with Sevak following.
At Ro's nod, Sevak heads out onto the Promenade. She goes
to the door, looks out, making sure he has gone. Then she
goes to the drawers in her desk, and opens one.

She reaches in, pulls out a hypospray, and pushes it to her
neck. It makes no hissing sound. She looks at it, confused.
Shakes it. Tries again. Nothing. Empty.

Annoyed, she throws the hypo back into the drawer, kicks it
closed, and stomps to the replicator set into the wall. One
last glance over her shoulder to be sure she is alone, she
speaks quietly and conspiratorially to the replicator...

RO
Computer. Hypospray, fifty cc's of
triptacederine, to be delivered in
doses of ten cc's. Please.

COMPUTER
Unable to comply.

RO
Why?

COMPUTER
Requested material can only be
replicated by registered medical
staff in station infirmary.

RO
Security override. Authorisation
Ro gamma six two.

COMPUTER
Security override not permitted.
Chief Medical Officer has final
authority on requested material.

RO
Okay... how about morphenolog?

COMPUTER
Unable to comply. Requested
material can only be -

RO
Asinolyathin, then.

COMPUTER
Unable to comply. Requested
material can -

RO
Look, just give me any kind of
painkiller, will you?!

COMPUTER
Unable to comply. Requested -

RO
Oh, forget it!

She THUMPS the replicator's panel in frustration, and slumps against her desk. Not what she needed today.

13 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

The turbolift rises into Ops, and Kira steps off it. She walks down the steps to the central Ops table. Cenn is a bit worried and nervous.

KIRA
Major. Have you found anything?

CENN

Umm... no, Captain. That's kind of the problem.

KIRA

What do you mean?

CENN

I've had the computer scanning non-stop, across the entire Vulcan citizen database. Didn't find anything. So I widened the search to the entire Federation, in case she was born somewhere else, like on a colony or something. I still couldn't find it.

KIRA

Major, get to the point.

CENN

Sorry, Captain. What I'm saying is... this woman I'm supposed to find, this universe's version of L'Haan... there's no sign of her anywhere. As far as I can tell, she doesn't exist. And she never has.

On Kira's worried reaction...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 INT. DS9 - MATTHIAS'S OFFICE

Matthias and Vaughn are still studying. Matthias turns her computer for Vaughn to see again. He peers at it...

VAUGHN

No, I'm afraid not. *Fal-tor-pan* is "the refusion," for putting a person's *katra* back in their body if it was removed too soon.

MATTHIAS

But isn't it the same basic principle? They're both about removing the *katra* from the mind that doesn't want it, and putting it somewhere else.

VAUGHN

Maybe. I don't know.

Vaughn sits back with a sigh, thoughtful.

VAUGHN

Counsellor, you're part Vulcan. Do you hold to this idea of the *katra* as a person's "soul"?

MATTHIAS

(ponders)

Telepathy is one of those weird phenomena that defies categorisation. You think it's all a matter of synaptic displacement and neuro-chemical differentials, and then it goes and confuses you by refusing to follow the normal scientific rules.

VAUGHN

Kind of like the wormhole aliens versus the Bajoran Prophets.

MATTHIAS

I suppose. I can't say if I have a soul or not. So I certainly can't say if I have a *katra*.

VAUGHN

I've worked with Vulcans on and off for most of my professional life. I have enormous respect for their intellect, their loyalty, the strength of their convictions. But I never could get a handle on this contradiction between the logical, empirical side of them, and the mystical, ritual side.

MATTHIAS

I guess they just don't see it as a contradiction. There's plenty of empirical evidence that they have telepathic abilities. It's only logical to incorporate that into their culture.

Vaughn ponders. Still not entirely convinced.

KIRA (comm)

Kira to Vaughn.

VAUGHN

(taps combadge)

Go ahead.

KIRA (comm)

Come to my office, Commander. We have a problem.

On Vaughn's worried reaction...

15 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira and Vaughn stand watching the wall-screen, which shows a live feed from the Infirmary, as Taran'atar lies on the bio-bed. Bashir and co continue to work around him, and we can still see security bodies nearby.

KIRA

How can there not be any L'Haan in this universe? It doesn't make sense. There's always a double of everybody!

VAUGHN

One of Captain Sisko's reports suggested there was no alternate of young Jake. The degree of similarity between us is already so statistically unlikely as to be verging on impossible. It has to break down somewhere.

KIRA

I guess. And of course it had to be now? So what do we do?

VAUGHN

Maybe Sevak can help after all.

KIRA

Won't that just leave him with the same problem?

VAUGHN

Vulcans are used to repressing things. But even T'Pol had an almost complete mental breakdown eventually. And believe me, she was no soft target. What chance does a Jem'Hadar have?

KIRA

(re screen)

He seems to have it under control now though.

VAUGHN

(frown, uncertain)

Yes. He does, doesn't he?

Vaughn stares at the screen, at Taran'atar.

16 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

The door OPENS, and Ro enters from the Promenade. She is carrying a small metallic canister, but trying to subtly keep it hidden behind her hand, not draw attention to it.

Ro stops, watches Taran'atar on the bio-bed. Etana notices her, steps into the main room to talk to her. As she does, Ro makes sure to keep the metal canister hidden from sight.

ETANA

Laren? You need anything?

RO

Oh... no. Just thought I'd come in and check on him. How's it going in there?

ETANA

Taran'atar's neural patterns show all classic signs of telepathic activity. Vaughn was right.

RO

I almost wish he wasn't.

(beat)

You should get back to work.

Etana knows that Ro is uncomfortable, but knows equally that she doesn't want to talk about it. She nods and heads back into the surgical suite.

Once everyone's backs are turned, Ro moves quietly but quickly towards the Infirmary's pharmacy storage area. She finds a row of metal canisters identical to the one she is carrying, gently removes one that is towards the back, and replaces it with the one she is carrying.

That done, she semi-hides the new canister in her grip, and tries to control her nerves enough to walk out of there without looking suspicious.

She glances again towards the surgical suite as she walks - their backs are still all turned. They haven't noticed. She gets out of there while she can.

17 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Cenn is hovering around the science console, working closely with Shar. They both look up with worry and embarrassment as Kira and Vaughn exit onto Ops.

CENN

Captain! Umm... I'm sorry, I can't explain it...

KIRA

Explain what, Major?

CENN

Lieutenant ch'Thane has managed to find our objective. We have a contact for L'Haan.

VAUGHN

Why didn't you find it before?

CENN

I really don't know, sir. I swear to the Prophets, I went through those databases down to the last quad of information. There was nothing there. But when I asked Shar for help... he found it straight away. It's right here.

Vaughn frowns again - that's curious. Something weird is going on here. But he keeps his own counsel for now.

KIRA

So? Where is she?

SHAR

The Vulcan citizen database lists L'Haan as a statistical analyst working for the local government in Shi'al Province.

KIRA

It doesn't matter who found it. Good work, both of you. Now get on the comms and get her here.

CENN
Yes, sir. Should I explain exactly
why we need her?

Kira glances to Vaughn - he subtly shakes his head.

KIRA
Not all of it. Just enough to
convince her, nothing more.

CENN
Understood.

18 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

Vannis paces back and forth in the room, anxiously waiting
for something. After a few moments, the computer bleeps.

COMPUTER
Connection established.

Vannis is relieved - at last. The screen on Taran'atar's
desk changes to reveal the smiling face of WEYOUN.

WEYOUN (screen)
Vannis - a delight to hear from
you as always. Do you have a
report for the Founder?

VANNIS
A very important one, Weyoun. I do
not appreciate the delay.

WEYOUN (screen)
The Founder's time is his own to
do with as he wishes. He has many
tasks demanding his attention, as
you well know.

VANNIS
Of course I know. But this
particular report will be of
primary interest to him, I am
certain. It involves his...
"chosen one."

WEYOUN (screen)

The Founder is not available to speak to you, Vannis. You may deliver your report to me, or not at all.

Vannis purses a little. Sucks a lemon. There is definite tension here, as the two Vorta subtly compete over who is the better servant to the Founders.

VANNIS

Very well. First Taran'atar has become afflicted with a mental deficiency that prevents him from performing his function here. I seek the Founder's permission to terminate him and take over the mission myself.

WEYOUN (screen)

(chuckle)

Taran'atar is the Founder's favourite, Vannis, you are quite correct about that. You and I do not have to understand why to accept that it is so. I think you will be disappointed.

VANNIS

That is the Founder's decision to make, not yours, Weyoun.

WEYOUN (screen)

The Founder made his decision when he gave Taran'atar this mission in the first place.

VANNIS

Circumstances have changed. He deserves to have all available information in case he wishes to change his mind, don't you think?

Annoyed pause. Weyoun knows she is right.

WEYOUN (screen)
Submit your report. I will pass it
on to the Founder, and let you
know his decision.

Vannis taps keys on the panel in front of her.

VANNIS
I am sending the details to you
now. Make sure to emphasise to the
Founder the part about how Vulcans
are seemingly capable of affecting
a Jem'Hadar's mind telepathically.

WEYOUN (screen)
(smug smile)
The Founder already knows that,
Vannis. He's known for a while.

What he means is, "I knew, and you didn't. Ha."

VANNIS
Why was I not informed?

WEYOUN (screen)
If the Founder had wished you
informed, you would have been.

VANNIS
As I recall, the Founder was not
the one who passed along my
orders.

Weyoun smiles, nakedly insincere as always. Then he cuts
the connection. Vannis is left to hiss in frustration.

19 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

A small Vulcan-design transport vessel, a shuttle of the
kind seen in TNG 5x08 "Unification II" approaches the
station and settles gently onto the docking ring.

KIRA (v.o.)
Station log, stardate 55238,
Captain Kira Nerys recording.

20 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA**

Taran'atar is back in the cell, behind a force field. He is pacing back and forth, irritated, and generally acting more like Taran'atar than he has in a while.

KIRA (v.o.)

Doctor Bashir has confirmed
Commander Vaughn's hypothesis.
Counsellor Matthias has pulled
together her best guess for the
Vulcan rituals. And L'Haan is on
her way.

21 **INT. DS9 - PROMENADE**

From this point on, we will refer to the version of L'Haan we have seen so far - the one in Taran'atar's head - as MU-L'HAAN (as in "Mirror Universe"). The one from this universe will be RU-L'HAAN (as in "Real Universe").

The Promenade airlock rolls open, and a clutch of people step out. Among them is RU-L'Haan. She looks identical to her MU counterpart, but this woman is shy, reserved and demure. The kind of woman who wouldn't say boo to a goose.

She looks around a little nervously. She has never done anything like this before, and it's all a bit overwhelming. She goes to one of the information boards, reads it, to try to find out where she is supposed to go.

Over the above:

KIRA (v.o.)

I only hope between them they can
help. If we lose Taran'atar, Bajor
could lose the alliance with the
Dominion. And that's something we
can't afford.

22 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE**

RU-L'Haan enters the security office, ready to meet Ro... but she stops and cocks an eyebrow as she realises Ro isn't there. The room is deserted.

23 **INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS**

Ro enters her quarters, glancing over her shoulder again to make sure she's not noticed. She quickly rushes to her bed, kneels down and rummages underneath it. She comes back with the metal canister from the Infirmary.

KIRA (v.o.)
I can't help thinking about Iliana Ghemor. She had someone else's memories forced on her as well - mine.

Shaking slightly with nerves, Ro opens the canister lid. Inside are several smaller containers - the type that fit into hyposprays, filled with drugs to be injected. She pulls one of them out, trots to the bathroom.

BATHROOM

She opens the cabinet, grabs the empty hypospray, jams the new drug cartridge into it, and pushes the injector to her neck. She sighs, breathes deeply and gets her nerves under control as she feels the painkiller flowing into her.

KIRA (v.o.)
I think that's part of what drove her insane.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

24 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira and Vaughn are in the lounge area, sitting together on one couch. Perched opposite them, still a bit wide-eyed and unsure, is RU-L'Haan. She is obviously nervous. Kira is trying to be as gentle and soothing as possible.

KIRA

What did Major Cenn tell you?

RU-L'HAAN

He said that I was needed for a special project working with Starfleet. That my assistance was vital to save another's sanity and avert a potential diplomatic incident.

Kira smirks a little - Cenn oversold it just a tad.

RU-L'HAAN

To a Vulcan, service is always a virtue. But I am not certain what service I can offer. I am only a low-level administrator. I am not Starfleet. I have no diplomatic training. This is only my third time leaving my world. How can I help?

VAUGHN

I'm afraid you're actually the only one who can help us. Have you ever heard of Starfleet's encounters with an alternate universe? One where all the same people seem to exist, but have lived very different lives?

RU-L'Haan blinks in Vulcan-cloaked surprise, and begins to ponder. This is all still very strange for her.

RU-L'HAAN

I have heard stories. I imagine there is much of Starfleet's work that is classified, and not for the average Federation citizen's consumption. Nevertheless, some unconfirmed rumours inevitably trickle down to us.

KIRA

And what do you think?

RU-L'HAAN

Some say those from the other universe are our... what is the human phrase... "evil twins." I myself do not place much stock in such moral absolutes. I do not believe any person is inherently, completely good or evil. We are all the sum of our choices, and those choices are made in response to our circumstances at the time.

(beat)

Although, I would certainly like to think that I am "good."

Kira smiles. Relaxes a bit. Gets to the point.

KIRA

There's a Jem'Hadar soldier in one of our security cells, and he's holding a *katra*.

RU-L'HAAN

(blink)

That is... unexpected.

KIRA

That's putting it mildly. What's even more interesting is that we believe the *katra* he's carrying is yours - or more accurately, the alternate version of you. We need your help to remove it.

RU-L'HAAN

If I understand you correctly,
Captain... you wish me to meld
with the Jem'Hadar. And persuade
this other version of myself to
join with me instead of... it.

KIRA

If you're willing.

RU-L'HAAN

It is a daunting thought, I will
admit. I have never been
especially skilled in the art of
mind melds.

Vaughn hands her a PADD.

VAUGHN

Here's everything we've been able
to piece together about possible
rituals and techniques. Hopefully
it'll be of use.

KIRA

Obviously it's not the kind of
thing we can force you to do. But
I hope you will help us. You're
the only solution we can think of.

RU-L'Haan takes a moment to think it over. It's definitely
a tall order. But she makes a decision.

RU-L'HAAN

I am willing to try.

KIRA

(relieved)

Thank you.

RU-L'HAAN

May I see the patient before I
begin?

Kira and Vaughn share an uncomfortable glance.

25 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA**

Taran'atar is in the cell, back behind a force field. He is still pacing back and forth, intense and frustrated. Like a tiger in a cage. Ro is standing in the room, watching. Sevak is still on duty behind her.

Kira ENTERS from the office, leading RU-L'Haan. Taran'atar instantly reacts to the Vulcan woman's presence, launching himself at the force field, roaring in fury. RU-L'Haan flinches back, trying to control her fear.

RO

Taran'atar! Calm down!

TARAN'ATAR

That is her! The Vulcan! Do you see her?

KIRA

It's okay. We can all see her. This is the L'Haan from this universe. She's going to help us fix you.

RU-L'Haan tentatively steps towards the cell, making sure to stay just far enough away. She gazes at him, fascinated. Taran'atar gazes back at her, breathing heavy, unsure. His eyes flicker to the side, as if listening to someone.

TARAN'ATAR

She tells me not to trust you.

RU-L'HAAN

I would imagine so. My intention is to remove her from your mind. Assuming she does not wish to be removed, it is only logical that she would attempt to dissuade you from allowing me to help.

TARAN'ATAR

She says you will hurt us.

RU-L'Haan turns back to Kira and Ro.

RU-L'HAAN

Curious. Though I would hardly claim to be an expert, I had not expected the *katra* to manifest as an entirely separate persona within the host body. Are you certain of your diagnosis?

KIRA

Doctor Bashir found evidence of telepathic activity, and two distinct neural patterns.

RU-L'HAAN

Very well. If you will excuse me, I would like to meditate to prepare myself.

KIRA

Absolutely. Whatever you need. Ro, can you find L'Haan some empty guest quarters to use?

RO

Sure. Come on.

Ro leads L'Haan out of the room. Kira stays behind...

KIRA

Just hold on, Taran'atar. Help's on the way.

Then she turns and leaves too. Sevak remains, at the back.

ANGLE

With a sneering growl, Taran'atar returns to pacing. But MU-L'Haan sits on the bench, watching him.

MU-L'HAAN

You must trust me, Taran'atar. It is not safe.

TARAN'ATAR

I trust nothing you say.

26 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Ro leads RU-L'Haan along the corridor. L'Haan is carrying Vaughn's padd, and looking around as they walk, still a bit perplexed by the situation she has found herself in. They reach a set of quarters, and Ro taps the control to open the door. Inside is an empty set of guest rooms.

RO

You can rest and meditate in here.
It's got all the usual facilities.
A replicator if you're hungry.
Just use the comm system if you
need anything, and let us know
when you're ready to go.

RU-L'HAAN

I will, thank you.

Ro turns to leave, but L'Haan calls after her.

RU-L'HAAN

Lieutenant...
(Ro turns back)
...emotional displays are not my
area of expertise. But from my
admittedly brief observations, you
appear to be quite anxious about
the situation with the Jem'Hadar.
More so than your crew mates. Why
is that?

RO

(tense, closed)
He and I... have a history.

RU-L'HAAN

And you dislike seeing him in
distress. I understand. If it
eases your mind, I am sure he
appreciates your help.

Ro doesn't want to talk anymore. She gives a terse nod of acknowledgement, and turns to walk away. Unoffended, L'Haan enters the quarters. The doors close behind her.

27 **INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA**

Taran'atar stands firm, hands behind his back, glaring from under heavy brows across the room at Sevak.

TARAN'ATAR

You have often been assigned as my escort, crewman. Is there a particular reason, I wonder?

The Vulcan security man stares back at him, alert and at attention, not rattled in the least.

SEVAK

Vulcans have greater physical strength and endurance than humans or Bajorans.

ANGLE

MU-L'Haan stares out from inside the cell, her hands behind her back and watching from under heavy brows.

MU-L'HAAN

A not especially subtle message from Lieutenant Ro, no doubt.

SEVAK

As you say, Ambassador. I was also one of those chosen to join the retrieval team who attempted to capture you on Harkoum. A position I was given in so small part because of my experience fighting Jem'Hadar during the war.

ANGLE

Taran'atar, looking out at Sevak, his eyebrow cocked.

TARAN'ATAR

Ah - a message from Commander Vaughn as well, then. Clearly they have decided to take no chances with my... "security".

SEVAK

You are an honoured diplomat.
"Security"... is your due.

Taran'atar grins in sour amusement... which considering he is a Vulcan right now, is downright creepy.

28 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS

RU-L'Haan kneels in a meditative pose, before the Vulcan meditation lamp in the centre of the empty floor. She stares calmly into the tiny flame at its centre, trying her best to order her thoughts and prepare.

29 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA

Sevak walks to check a panel nearer to Taran'atar's cell. Taran'atar watches him from behind the force field.

TARAN'ATAR

Tell me, Sevak...

ANGLE

MU-L'Haan continues Taran'atar's question...

MU-L'HAAN

...Do you believe that this woman, this other L'Haan, can do what she claims? As a Vulcan, do you believe she is capable of it?

SEVAK

Starfleet is a resourceful organisation. Once they identify a problem, they inevitably find a solution.

MU-L'HAAN

She is not Starfleet.

SEVAK

No. But she is part of their plan. And she shares their values. All Vulcans do.

MU-L'Haan seems to genuinely ponder this reply. It gives her food for thought.

MU-L'HAAN

Fascinating. My people also share a vision. Ironically, one inspired by Starfleet.

ANGLE

Sevak walks forward a few steps, closer to Taran'atar. He is having an interesting conversation, and the Jem'Hadar is behind a force field. There couldn't possibly be any risk.

SEVAK

A Jem'Hadar's values are simply to do what the Founders tell him to.

TARAN'ATAR

Yes, that's true.
(muttered aside)
I'll have to break him of that.

Sevak eyebrows, confused, and steps closer...

30 INT. DS9 - GUEST QUARTERS

RU-L'Haan stares into her meditative flame...

31 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

Bashir and his staff are getting ready for the coming operation. The door opens, and Vaughn enters. He goes straight to Bashir, speaks to him firmly...

VAUGHN

Doctor, are you busy?

BASHIR

Umm... well, I was in the middle of getting ready for -

VAUGHN

Your staff can handle that. I need to speak with you, please. In private.

Vaughn turns and walks away. Bashir is obviously supposed to follow.

BASHIR

Etana... carry on with the preparations. I'll be back in a bit.

ETANA

Yes, Doctor.

A bit baffled, Bashir follows Vaughn onto the Promenade.

32 INT. DS9 - SECURITY CELLS AREA

Sevak is close to the force field now, standing directly in front of Taran'atar, intrigued by their conversation.

TARAN'ATAR

Vulcans are telepaths. Can you not sense her presence in my mind? Do you not recognise each other?

SEVAK

We are not Betazoids. Mental communion requires physical contact between us.

TARAN'ATAR

You would not know for certain that she was even here, without touching me directly?

SEVAK

That is correct.

TARAN'ATAR

Then allow me to demonstrate.

Quick as lightning, his arms shoot forward, PASS THROUGH the force field. His hands grab for Sevak's neck...

ANGLE

...MU-L'Haan shudders and grits her teeth against the pain of the force field. Her hands on Sevak's neck, she quickly and efficiently performs a double Vulcan neck pinch.

ANGLE

Caught off guard, Sevak slumps to the ground. His arms leading the way, Taran'atar GRUNTS and ROARS as he forces his way through the force field. It SIZZLES and SPLUTTERS around him as he does, but it's not enough to stop him.

He is outside the cell. He stands and stares down at the unconscious Sevak at his feet. MU-L'Haan steps out from behind him, looks down too.

MU-L'HAAN

We must go. Now.

ANGLE

Alone, Taran'atar leaps agilely into the air, SHROUDING as he goes. In the ceiling of the security area, a vent slams open and closed again. Taran'atar is gone.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

33 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

RED ALERT sirens screams, bright red lights flashing. Kira EXITS her office in a rush, heading directly to Bowers at tactical, who is working his panels hard.

KIRA
What's going on?

BOWERS
Automated alarm. I'm tracking it
down now.

An image comes up - the high-angle view of the security cells area. It clearly shows the empty cell, and Sevak unconscious on the floor. Kira's face drops in horror...

34 INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS

Ro had been in the midst of lifting another hypospray to her neck. She reacts in surprise as she hears the alert...

KIRA (comm)
Kira to Vaughn and Ro. Security
breach. Taran'atar's out, and
Sevak's down.

VAUGHN (comm)
Acknowledged.

She mindlessly throws the hypospray aside, no longer caring about it, and runs for the door.

35 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Taran'atar and MU-L'Haan jog down the corridor together as the red alert siren sounds around them.

TARAN'ATAR
How was I able to escape the force
field?

MU-L'HAAN

I was able to briefly retune your biorhythms to allow you to pass. I would have done it sooner, but your high level of agitation did not help.

TARAN'ATAR

Where are you taking me?

MU-L'HAAN

To remove an obstacle.

They continue along the corridor...

36 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Vaughn stands in the corridor, by an open cabinet set into the wall - a weapons locker. He is handing out weapons to Cenn, Aleco and half a dozen other security EXTRAS. In the meantime he speaks into the comm...

VAUGHN

Captain - get Shar and Nog on the sensors. Remember when we tracked Kitana'klan through the station using the emissions from his personal shroud?

37 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Kira nods to Nog and Shar, sat at their usual stations...

KIRA

We're on it.

Shar works his panel hard, his concentration clear as a bell in the crisis... but he shakes his head.

SHAR

There's no trace, Commander.

NOG

He'd know we'd try that. He won't be cloaked.

SHAR
Tracking Jem'Hadar life signs...
Habitat ring, section twelve A.

BOWERS
Guest quarters.

KIRA
(realising)
He's going after L'Haan.

38 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Vaughn closes up the weapons locker - they're ready.

VAUGHN
Understood, Captain. We're moving
out. Vaughn to Ro.

39 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Ro replies as she strides quickly down the corridor...

RO
I know, Commander. I'm on my way
there now.

VAUGHN (comm)
Negative. Stand down.

Sneering, Ro taps her combadge to close the channel.

RO
Screw that.

40 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Taran'atar and MU-L'Haan stride urgently side by side...

MU-L'HAAN
My earlier offer remains open,
Taran'atar. Return with me to my
universe and join the fight.

TARAN'ATAR
What fight?

MU-L'HAAN

All the Vulcans of my universe are slaves, like you. We fight the domination of the Alliance.

TARAN'ATAR

More lies. You placed yourselves into slavery voluntarily.

MU-L'HAAN

To serve as spies within the belly of the beast, yes. We work for freedom nevertheless.

TARAN'ATAR

Then why would I join you? I am not meant to be free!

MU-L'HAAN

Very well - if you want orders, we will give you orders. But you have no place here. The Federation distrusts you. The Dominion exiled you to a mission contrary to your very existence. Come with me!

Taran'atar considers that... Then suddenly, he bumps into a force field. They turn to look the other way - another force field at the other end of the corridor. Trapped.

41 **INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS**

The red alert alarm continues to sound in the background. Vannis is speaking on the comm with Weyoun again...

VANNIS

Why not?!

WEYOUN (screen)

Because the Founder says so.

VANNIS

Taran'atar is out of control! He is running amok on this station as we speak.

WEYOUN (screen)
The Founder trusts Starfleet to
handle the problem.

VANNIS
And what of the Vulcans? One of
them is here right now to force
herself into his mind. It is
unacceptable!

WEYOUN
(insistent)
The Founder trusts Starfleet. He
insists they would never abuse the
power. It is not their way. You
will do nothing to interfere,
Vannis. That is the Founder's
order. Will you question it?

Infuriated, Vannis stabs the controls to cut the signal.

42 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

A raised PHASER leads the way around a corner... preceding
Vaughn, Cenn and Aleco. They take up defensive positions
staring down the corridor - we see the force field, and
another one at the opposite end. No sign of Taran'atar.

VAUGHN
We're here. But he's not. Shar,
you're sure this is right?

SHAR (comm)
That's his last location. But the
signal has disappeared.

He taps his combadge to close, and turns to Cenn and Aleco.

VAUGHN
He's in there, but he's shrouded
again. You two, aim your phasers.
The moment I drop the force field,
cover the whole corridor in
continuous phaser fire. Even
cloaked, he can't avoid that.

Cenn and Aleco nod acknowledgement, and carefully creep forward until they are just in front of the force field. They look to the side - Vaughn is at a computer panel.

Nervously, Cenn and Aleco aim their phasers. Keeping his own phaser in his spare hand, Vaughn presses a control.

The force field drops. Cenn and Aleco sweep continuous PHASER FIRE back and forth across the entire length and breadth of the corridor. They fire for 10 seconds or more.

VAUGHN

Cease fire.

They do. There is still no sign of Taran'atar. No sound, no body. Vaughn approaches warily, phaser held out.

CENN

Shouldn't being hit with a phaser
force him to drop the shroud?

VAUGHN

Ordinarily, yes.

The three of them move slowly and stealthily further into the corridor, keeping a sharp eye out for anything.

ALECO

You know this is a trap, right?

VAUGHN

I know.

Slowly PAN UP, until we are looking at the ceiling... and there is a cloaked, half-visible SHAPE on the ceiling of the corridor, hands and feet pressed against the walls.

In a fast, complex gymnastic manoeuvre, the figure SWINGS down, catching Vaughn, Cenn and Aleco unawares with swift, spinning karate kicks.

Cenn is slammed sideways, and SCREAMS as his arm crunches against the bulkhead, the bones shattered. Vaughn OOFs to the ground with a groan.

Aleco is the least affected - he rolls to a kneel and FIRES his phaser again at the quickly retreating shrouded figure. But he only hits bulkhead. Taran'atar is gone.

43 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Ro is at the guest quarters, punching the door chime and HAMMERing on the door. Red Alert lights flash around her. Finally the door opens, and a worried looking RU-L'Haan appears in the doorway.

RU-L'HAAN
Lieutenant? What is wrong?

RO
You're in danger.

RU-L'HAAN
Surely not. Who would -

Ro is barrelled down by an invisible force, knocked off her feet with an OOF of escaping breath. RU-L'Haan squeaks in fear, staggering back into the room...

...Ro lies on the floor, looking back up in terror... as Taran'atar UNSHROUDS in the doorway. He HISSES at Ro, then turns to RU-L'Haan, starts to advance... but then stops, as if asserting control over his own body again.

TARAN'ATAR
No! I will not do this!

MU-L'Haan steps out from behind him...

MU-L'HAAN
Kill her and let's get out of here!

Taran'atar shakes his head furiously, trying to clear it of MU-L'Haan's influence...

TARAN'ATAR
I have sworn not to hurt these people, and I will not!

MU-L'HAAN

I can take control and force you
to do it.

TARAN'ATAR

No!

Taran'atar looks down at Ro, who is still on the floor,
looking back at him... then he turns back to MU-L'Haan...

RO'S POV

Watching Taran'atar seem to argue with thin air...

TARAN'ATAR

If I promise to go with you...
freely, of my own will... will you
spare them?

Ro is surprised, and a little touched... RU-L'Haan cowers
in her quarters... MU-L'Haan steps up to Taran'atar...

MU-L'HAAN

Very well. Diplomacy at work.

Taran'atar looks back to Ro, almost apologetic...

TARAN'ATAR

Goodbye, Lieutenant. Be safe.

And he runs off again, SHROUDing as he goes. Ro turns to
watch him go, ambivalent how she feels about this...

44 INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY

The large double doors open just a crack... and then two
green and scaly hands reach in and begin pulling the door
open with a squeal of resisting servos.

Finally the doors are open enough, and Taran'atar slips
through. He runs to the far wall, where there is a large
cargo transporter, and immediately works the panels.

45 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Nog is working hard on his own panels. It's taking all his
concentration. Kira hovers nearby...

NOG
He's in a cargo bay on level ten.
He's accessed the transporter...

Kira trusts him to handle it...

46 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Taran'atar is at the panel, working hard...

MU-L'HAAN
Do you recall the sequence for
multi-dimensional transport?

TARAN'ATAR
Of course. I remember everything.
But they are trying to block me.

He keeps working the panels...

47 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

Nog's fingers are flying over the keys as he tries to keep up with Taran'atar...

NOG
Dammit. He knows the computer
system as well as I do.

48 **INT. DS9 - CARGO BAY**

Taran'atar is getting frustrated... but he finally hits one last key with a victorious growl.

TARAN'ATAR
They have failed. We are free to
go.

He steps up to the large transporter pad. The colourful and complex dimensional transport signal forms, twisting and turning Taran'atar inside and out until he disappears.

49 **INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE**

The transporter stage in Ops hums to life... the twisting signal forms...

...and Taran'atar rematerialises on the platform. Realising where he is, he FOARS in fury.

Bowers and the security extras are all there to point their phasers directly at Taran'atar. From outside her office, Kira looks across Ops, saddened for him.

Nog stands up from his station, and smiles smugly at him.

NOG

I may not have been able to stop you from activating the multi-dimensional transporter. But it was as easy as chewing a gree worm to activate the multi-dimensional shield I designed. Your signal bounced off it... and came right back here.

Furious, Taran'atar moves forwards, on the attack... but bounces off another force field around the transporter.

NOG

And you won't get through that force field either. It's on a randomly shifting frequency.

KIRA

Shar...

Shar hits keys on his panel... and a GAS begins to seep out from the air vents over the transporter platform. Contained inside the force field, the gas gets thicker and thicker...

Taran'atar fights against it, refusing to choke or succumb, but it is getting stronger, and he is getting weaker.

Finally he SLUMPS to the deck, unconscious. Bowers hits keys on his tactical panels, and the Red Alert is silenced.

It's now eerily quiet, as they catch their breath. They all stare down at the unconscious Jem'Hadar...

50 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

Taran'atar JERKS back to consciousness... and finds himself strapped to a hi-tech chair in the surgical suite.

His entire body is held by countless low-tech but powerful straps, covering his arms, legs, chest, everywhere. He struggles against them, but they don't budge. The chair itself is bolted to the deck in several places too.

Kira, Ro, Vannis, RU-L'Haan, Vaughn, Matthias and Bashir stand around him, watching.

KIRA
Welcome back.
 (to RU-L'Haan)
Are you ready?

RU-L'HAAN
I believe so, Captain.

Tentatively, still somewhat scared of him, the Vulcan woman steps towards Taran'atar. He ROARS in frustration, strains against the straps covering his body... but it's no use.

RU-L'Haan lifts her hand, arranges the fingers into the position, and presses them against Taran'atar's face, gently at first, getting firmer.

RU-L'HAAN
My mind to your mind...

He struggles against it... but she's in.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

51 EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD

The rolling, golden sea of changelings, the gently swelling waves of protoplasm lapping peacefully at the stony shore of the small rocky islet in the centre of it. Then we glide slowly out a small way into the "sea"...

...and find Taran'atar, submerged under the surface. He is fighting to get free of the gooey mass. His hand bursts out, his face following it, wordlessly gasping for air. But the changeling waves fold over him, and pull him back down.

He is drowning in it.

TARAN' ATAR' s POV

Looking out from inside the Great Link, through the golden flowing liquid to the air beyond it... and a FIGURE stands here on the shore, its hand outstretched to him.

Taran'atar struggles forward, desperate to escape... he breaches the surface...

...and it's MU-L'Haan, holding out her hand, offering to help. He has only to reach for it. The changeling mass is reluctant to let go, grasping for his unyielding body...

...but he pulls himself through it, grasps MU-L'Haan's hand. She helps him the last bit of the way. The Great Link recedes to the edge of the islet... and Taran'atar stands.

TARAN' ATAR

You saved me.

MU-L' HAAN

Remember that.

RU-L' HAAN (o.s.)

No. Ignore her.

They turn, and see that RU-L'Haan is also on the island...

52 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

Taran'atar is strapped to his chair. RU-L'Haan is crouched down in front of him, her fingers on his craggy face. Their eyes are open, staring unblinkingly into each other's...

Everyone else is silent and on edge as the meld continues. Bashir is checking readings on his instruments, uneasily glancing back and forth between them and the two melders.

KIRA

Is there any way to know how it's going?

BASHIR

His neural readings are all over the shop. Something's definitely happening in there... but I couldn't tell you what.

Vannis watches the proceedings, tense and unhappy...

INSERT - HER HAND

Held in her hand, half hidden up her sleeve, Vannis is gripping a sharp and deadly looking KNIFE.

BACK TO SCENE

She sneers, trying to decide if she should intervene...

53 **EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD**

MU-L'Haan and RU-L'Haan face off, both cold and logical, across the small rocky islet. Taran'atar stands between, as if caught between them. But they mostly ignore him.

RU-L'HAAN

Ah. The world of the Founders. Understandable, if predictable.

MU-L'HAAN

He is a Jem'Hadar. One would not expect much in the way of imagination.

RU-L'Haan looks curiously at her counterpart - this is a mental contact, so she knows the other's mind.

RU-L'HAAN

Strange. You have lived a very different life to mine. Quiet service to a despotic tyrant, in the name of a greater ideal...

(realising)

...you know of the great Spock.

MU-L'HAAN

It is Spock's great vision that inspires all Vulcans. You are the more strange to me... there are barriers. Why do you keep yourself hidden from me?

RU-L'HAAN

Perhaps you are simply not as skilled a telepath as you would like to believe.

MU-L'HAAN

Or perhaps I am not the only one who lives a life of secrets.

RU-L'HAAN

My life is not the issue here. Neither is yours. It is his.

She gestures to Taran'atar, who stands to the side, a little bewildered, watching the exchange, uncertain and unable to interfere...

MU-L'HAAN

My people need his strength and power. The good of the many outweighs the good of the one.

RU-L'HAAN

An aphorism I would agree with, but one which you misuse out of self-service. You simply do not wish your existence to end.

MU-L'HAAN

Can you name one who does?

RU-L'HAAN

Come with me, L'Haan. Leave Taran'atar and let me take you home. To a Vulcan where your people are already free.

MU-L'HAAN

Perhaps I should take control of your body instead. It would certainly be a more suitable fit. I could return to my role as a spy in the Alliance, and no-one would be the wiser.

RU-L'HAAN

To cling so desperately to life when it is so clearly over is illogical. Even your people must know the ways of Surak.

MU-L'HAAN

We do. They teach us that what is necessary is logical. For example, I found it logical to use our dialogue to provide the time and distraction required to find the weaknesses in your psychic barriers. And now I know for certain that I will never join with one such as you.

MU-L'Haan suddenly pushes forward and grabs RU-L'Haan's face in a double mind-meld hold, like she did Taran'atar.

54 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

RU-L'Haan JERKS, still deep in the mind-meld but reacting instinctively to the psychic attack. She is vibrating, trembling with the effort of the meld, breathing troubled and irregular.

Kira looks to Bashir, worried...

BASHIR

His neural readings are going haywire. This can't be healthy for him.

KIRA

Should we try and break them up?

MATTHIAS

I very strongly advise against that, Captain. Interrupting a mind meld can cause serious damage to both participants.

BASHIR

It's also what got us in this mess in the first place.

KIRA

So that's a no, then.

Vannis is more tense than ever now, as they watch RU-L'Haan and Taran'atar tremble and jerk and struggle. She glances to each side, trying to see if anyone is watching her...

INSERT - HER HAND

Slowly and smoothly, she starts to draw the knife out from inside her sleeve and take a stronger grip on it, getting ready to use it...

BACK TO SCENE

Kira steps forward a bit to speak. Vannis flinches, worried that she is about to be caught. But Kira talks to Matthias.

KIRA

If I talk to him, can he hear me?

MATTHIAS

Subconsciously, yes. He won't be able to respond, though.

Vannis curses herself and returns the knife to concealment. She watches nervously as Kira approaches Taran'atar and crouches down by him, speaking to him directly.

KIRA
Taran'atar... it's Kira. You have
to fight. Don't give in. It's your
mind, your body. Don't let her
control you. Go into battle, and
reclaim your life.

Kira looks up to Ro...

55 **EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD**

On Taran'atar, as he stands half-collapsed against a rock wall, watching the two L'Haans locked in some weird mind-meld wrestling match, struggling for control of him...

Marshalling his will, he forces himself to stand upright...

56 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

Taking Kira's cue, Ro approaches and crouches down on the other side of Taran'atar. He continues to shudder and stare unblinkingly into RU-L'Haan's eyes...

RO
It's Ro. I'm here. You can beat
this, Taran'atar. You're stronger
than this!

Taran'atar and L'Haan don't react, still locked in their meld, staring at each other...

57 **EXT. FOUNDERS' WORLD**

MU-L'Haan and RU-L'Haan struggle against each other, so much so that they don't notice Taran'atar standing, and approaching them with a furious growl...

TARAN'ATAR
Get out of my head!

He grabs both L'Haans' heads, one in each hand, and forces them towards each other. They are caught by surprise, eyes flaring in shock, but he is too strong for them...

...He crushes their heads into one another. The two images of MU-L'Haan and RU-L'Haan cross over like two photographs overlaid on top of each other.

Both L'Haans SCREAM as their images are blended together, becoming one multiplied L'Haan... Taran'atar ROARS as his hands force the two of them further into each other...

Until finally they fade from view, screams echoing, and Taran'atar is left alone. He brings himself under control, straightens himself with pride and satisfaction...

58 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

...RU-L'Haan GASPS a deep breath and comes back to herself. She slowly, methodically releases her hand from its grip on Taran'atar's face, breaking their eye contact.

Taran'atar slumps in his straps, unconscious. RU-L'Haan staggers back on her haunches, on the verge of toppling until Ro catches her and steadies her.

KIRA
What happened?

RU-L'HAAN
It is over. He broke the meld
himself. He has a remarkable will.

Ro helps RU-L'Haan to her feet. Bashir moves in to begin scanning Taran'atar's brain...

KIRA
What about L'Haan? The other
L'Haan, I mean.

RU-L'HAAN
She is within me. I feel her,
beating against my mind...

Vannis relaxes, lets out a long breath of relief. Closes her eyes and clenches her jaw, silently berating herself.

KIRA
Doctor...?

BASHIR

Too soon to tell. I'll need to do
the full scan again to be sure.

VAUGHN

I'll stay with him.

Kira nods her assent. She gently moves to lead RU-L'Haan
and Ro out of the surgical suite...

MAIN INFIRMARY

Sevak and Cenn both sit on bio-beds, and Tarses and Richter
are working on them. Sevak has a greenish bruise on his
head, and Cenn's broken arm is in a futuristic sling. Kira
and Ro enter, leading RU-L'Haan.

KIRA

You two okay?

SEVAK

I wish to apologise, Captain. I am
responsible for Taran'atar's
escape, and for Major Cenn's
injury.

KIRA

Could have happened to any of us,
crewman. Don't beat yourself up
about it.

CENN

(re broken arm)

I guess you and I finally have
something in common, eh,
Lieutenant?

RO

If you think a broken arm's even
remotely comparable to what he did
to me, Major, then we really don't
have a thing in common.

Cenn gulps at the icy brush off. And then Ro, Kira and
L'Haan are gone.

SURGICAL SUITE

Bashir and Etana move the heavy brain-scanning equipment into place around Taran'atar again. Vaughn stands to one side, observing. Vannis is on the other side, likewise.

59 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Kira and Ro escort RU-L'Haan back to the docking port.

KIRA

What will you do now?

RU-L'HAAN

Return to Vulcan, and seek the help of the Elders of Gol to remove the *katra* from my mind and place it into an ark, to be stored in the Hall of Ancient Thought beneath Mount Seleya.

KIRA

Will you be able to control her?

RU-L'HAAN

It will take heavy meditation and a great deal of emotional control, but I will do so. Nevertheless, it would be best to be home as soon as possible.

KIRA

We understand. Thank you again for everything you've done. If you need anything from us, don't hesitate to ask.

RU-L'HAAN

I have everything I need. Live long and prosper, Captain. Lieutenant.

With a nod of acknowledgement to both, RU-L'Haan steps into the airlock and heads back to her shuttle.

Kira turns to Ro...

KIRA
You alright, Lieutenant?

RO
Great. Excuse me, Captain.

Ro turns and walks away. Kira watches her go...

60 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

Vannis stands alone in the room. She is battling silently with herself, furious over nearly having disobeyed the Founders, relieved she didn't have to, indignant that she was ever placed in such a position... she is a whirlwind of confused and conflicting emotions.

She SLAMS her hand down on Taran'atar's computer console in frustration. This mission is not going how she planned.

61 INT. DS9 - RO'S QUARTERS

Ro enters the bathroom of her quarters, goes to the mirror cabinet, grabs the hypospray...

She stops, stares at her reflection, remembering...

FLASHBACK

Outside RU-L'Haan's quarters, Ro is barrelled down by an invisible force. Then Taran'atar unshrouds and hisses down at her on the floor...

BACK TO SCENE

She pants and grits her teeth against the memory...

FLASHBACK

Ro crouches with Taran'atar, deep in the mind meld...

RO
You can beat this, Taran'atar.
You're stronger than this!

BACK TO SCENE

Ro looks at herself, looks at the hypospray... then subtly shakes her head. No. She's not stronger than this.

She pushes the hypospray to her neck, injects the drugs. Breathes in relief as they flood into her bloodstream...

62 **INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE**

The main door opens, and Bashir pokes his head in.

BASHIR

Captain? You wanted to see me?

Kira and Vaughn are both there. By the looks on their faces, something is obviously wrong. There's bad news.

KIRA

Yes, thank you, Doctor. Take a seat.

He does.

BASHIR

I've finished the scans. The double brain wave patterns are gone. What's left matches with the readings I took last year. There's just him in there now.

KIRA

That's good to know, but that's not the reason I asked you here.

Bashir is slightly confused and starting to worry.

BASHIR

What's going on, Captain?

KIRA

Julian... I just thought you should know... we received a report from Admiral Ross. He said... that there's been an accident on the USS *Luna*.

Bashir tries not to jump to any conclusions. It might be nothing. Kira continues...

KIRA

We don't have all the details yet.
What we do know is that there was
some kind of overload in the
engine room. There were...
casualties.

BASHIR

Dax...

On Bashir's quietly stunned face, as he wonders whether to believe the worst...

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW